

REMARKS

This Amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action dated June 5, 2003.

Claims 1-12 and 14-17 are pending with claim 13 having been canceled without prejudice.

The objection to claim 1 has been overcome by amending the claim to correct the misspelled word and therefore, this objection should be withdrawn.

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. This rejection is now moot since this claim has been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) based on a number of references. More specifically, claims 1-14 are rejected as being anticipated by any one of (1) '448 Goedhart et al.; (2) Lambremont et al.; (3) Dixit et al.; (4) '886 Goedhart et al., and (5) Rayner.

As a general matter, Applicants draw the Examiner's attention to the fact that none of the compositions in the cited references are for the care and maintenance of water-resistant surfaces, as in the present application. More specifically, the '448 Goedhart et al., Dixit et al., and '886 Goedhart et al. references disclose dishwashing compositions, while the Lambremont et al. reference shows an acidic thickened shear thinning composition; and the Rayner reference discloses an abrasive composition. Thus, each of these references discloses a much different application environment than the present one and therefore, the characteristics of the respective compositions that lead to improved application performance will vary.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite a composition for the care and maintenance of water-resistance surfaces that includes at least one mineral from the group of sheet silicates with an average mineral lamina size of $< 10^{-7}$ m. The composition is also of the type that is capable of forming a film. As explained in the specification at page 7, paragraph 2, it is important that the sheet silicates in combination with the other components are capable of forming films. As further explained, a number of materials used in conventional compositions do not have such a tendency.

Claim 14 has been amended to recite a method for cleaning and care of water-resistant surfaces. One of the recited steps involves providing a composition having the characteristics recited in claim 1. Thus, for the same reasons recited above with respect to claim 1, Applicants submit that the composition provided in this step is neither disclosed nor suggested in any of the cited references.

In addition, none of the cited references relates to cleaning and care of water-resistant surfaces and therefore, do not relate to the presently recited method of use of the composition. Thus, the other recited steps in amended claim 14 involve the dilution of the composition and the application of the diluted composition to the surface, thereby resulting in a residue being formed. Also, the last step recites is the drying of the residue to form a film that contains the surfactant and the sheet silicate. As mentioned, none of the cited references involve the formation of a film in any step that may relate to a use of those recited compositions.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of amended claim 14.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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